

**CITY OF FREMONT  
CENTRAL PARK – LAKE ELIZABETH  
CANADA GOOSE MANAGEMENT INFORMATION**

The resident Canadian Goose population in Central Park has been one of the most challenging issues for City Staff to manage over the years and it has become even more difficult as the City continues to manage the park with a reduced work force.

The resident Canada Goose flock is one of the variety of natural features that make Central Park the unique environment it is. Flocks of this internationally protected bird species bring the capacity to devour large areas of turf and produce a pound of feces per bird per day. Managing the mixed use of humans and wildlife at Central Park (450+ acres) creates real problems for both Park Maintenance and Park Ranger Staff.

Fremont has been more successful than many other agencies in actively managing the Canada Goose population through the City's Canada Goose Management Plan, adopted by City Council and implemented in 1998. Since implementing the Canada Goose Management Plan, Central Park Staff has seen numbers drop from sixteen hundred birds during the height of the annual molt migration to a year-round resident flock of about three hundred geese.

In addition to using goose herding dogs to discourage birds from residing in the park, the Goose Management Plan includes enforcing a "No Feeding of Wildlife" ordinance, and administering a Federal Permit authorizing the oiling of Canada Goose eggs, a process that prevents Canada Goose eggs from hatching.

Both resident and migratory Canada Goose molt between Memorial Day and late July each year, which occurs during the peak season of annual use by Central Park visitors. Molting is the manner in which Canada Goose shed their feathers on an annual basis. While molting, they shed their flight feathers and are unable to fly during the regrowth period. As a survival instinct during this period, they stay close to a food source (the turf) and a safety zone (the water). Central Park Staff works to keep the molting birds herded into the water as much as possible

during this time frame. Compounding the problem further, despite the City's "No Feeding" ordinance and staff efforts to educate the public, our customers and their children continue to feed the birds.

A contributing factor to the increased number of Canada Geese in the East Bay has been the breeding success in other areas. In the years that the City of Fremont has held a Federal Permit to oil goose eggs, only two Canada Goose eggs have been recorded as hatched in Central Park. However, the geese are successfully nesting and raising young in other areas of Fremont and the East Bay. In spite of Fremont's efforts to affect a decrease in the resident Canada Goose population, the numbers of birds frequenting Central Park may continue to increase as we cannot control conditions in other jurisdictions.

Park Maintenance and Park Ranger Staffs continue to manage Canada Goose population as effectively as possible, albeit with reduced resources. The impacts of budget reductions that resulted in Park Maintenance and Park Ranger Staff layoffs in FY 2002-03 continue to this day, making our job more difficult. Prior to 2003 we were able to financially support 7 full-time Park Rangers and 20 Seasonal Rangers. Today we are staffed with only 4 full-time Park Rangers, one  $\frac{3}{4}$  time Park Ranger, and one Seasonal Ranger.

The City of Fremont will continue to implement its Canada Goose Management Plan as our resources allow in meeting the challenges posed by both the resident and migratory Canada Goose populations. Our aim is always to maintain Central Park/Lake Elizabeth as a highly valued recreational and aesthetic resource for the community.

Thank you for your interest in the Canada Goose population at Central Park. Please feel free to contact Damon Sparacino 510-494-4372 or via E-mail at [dcsparacino@fremont.gov](mailto:dcsparacino@fremont.gov) with questions, concerns or if you would like additional information on this subject.